

Westwood & Highland Park Neighborhood Plan

PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE

INTRODUCTION

The parks, recreation & open space planning element of the Westwood & Highland Park Plan was developed by the Planning Committee and the planning team. The Planning Area's public space assets are significant, and with planned

developments projected for the area, these assets will increase. The Comprehensive Plan sets open space and recreation facilities goals for the Planning Areas with Residential Urban Villages. The Comprehensive Plan's goals are met with this Neighborhood Plan, as described in Tables 5 and 6, below.

Table 5
Open Space and Recreation Facilities Goals
(Seattle Comprehensive Plan)

Urban Village Open Space Population Based Goals	Residential Urban Villages	Westwood Highland Park
Urban Village Open Space Population Based Goals	One acre of Village Open Space per 1,000 households. <u>Requirement Met →</u>	47.10 IL 2.92 (Households: 1,292 (1990); Acres of Village Open Space: (47.10 = 13.10 + 34.00)).
Urban Village Open Space Distribution Goals	All locations in the Village within approximately 1/8 mile Of Village Open Space. <u>Requirement NOT met* →</u>	Eastern portions of Urban Village from 22nd Ave. SW east and from SW Cloverdale St. south are <u>not within</u> 1/8th mile of Open Space. * Longfellow Creek Legacy Trail, providing access to Open Space, is within 1/8 mile.
Qualifying Criteria for Village Open Space	Dedicated Open Space of at least 10,000 square feet in size, publicly accessible, and usable for recreation and social activities. <u>Requirement Met →</u>	All Open Spaces listed <u>meet these definitions.</u>
Village Commons, Recreation Facility and Community Garden Goals	At least one usable open space of at least one acre in size (Village Commons) where overall residential density is 10 households per gross acre or more. <u>Requirement Met →</u> One facility for indoor public assembly in Village with greater than 2,000. households <u>Requirement Met →</u> One dedicated community garden for each 2,500 households in the Village with at least one dedicated garden site, <u>Requirement Met →</u>	<u>No part of Urban Village exceeds 10 households per gross acre that is not within 1 / 8 mile of usable open space of at least one acre in size.</u> <u>Urban Village is 1,292 households (1990), 700 to add, total of 1992 households.</u> (SW Community Center does have facility for public assembly). <u>Urban Village is 1,292 households, 700 to add, total of 1992 households..</u>

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Table 6
Capacity of Open Space
Facilities in
Westwood Highland Park
Urban Village

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Capacity (acres)</i>
Roxhill Park	14.10
Westcrest Park	93.20
<i>Playfields</i>	
E.C. Hughes Playfield	6.40
Highland Park Playground	6.60
<i>Swimming Pools</i>	
Southwest Swimming Pool	
<i>Community Centers</i>	
Southwest Community Center	
<i>Open Spaces/ Greenspaces</i>	
Longfellow Creek	34.00
<i>Non DPR Parks, Recreation, Schools, Open Space Facilities</i>	
Roxhill Elementary	
Highland Park Elementary	
Sealth High School	

While the goals for open space quantities are met, the distribution of open spaces, their accessibility and public usefulness to the community are not fully consistent with

the intent of the Comprehensive Plan. The Plan's approach to remedy this is to link the existing open space together with pedestrian facilities and amenities. To serve the diverse community of Westwood & Highland Park, there is a need to connect important community facilities and magnets with pathways that offer both functional and recreational uses.

The Planning Committee has therefore developed recommendations for improvements for these pathways, bicycle routes and associated open space and recreation improvements. The Plan includes strategies for developing a trail system that meets these goals, addresses likely needs of the future and would result in a neighborhood with well used pedestrian pathways and open spaces that increase opportunities for neighbors to meet and get to know each other.

Attention to issues of pedestrian safety is a key principle in this neighborhood plan. Westwood & Highland Park are long-established neighborhoods with sidewalks in most areas. However, several street and arterial crossing points are dangerous due to poor locations and/or visibility, inadequate marking and lighting. There is fast moving auto traffic in much of this neighborhood. Buffers, such as landscaping and on-street parking, between pedestrians and this traffic are rare. There are no striped bike lanes. The Plan includes specific recommendations aimed at making neighborhood pedestrian routes safe, useful, and attractive.

Longfellow Creek has its headwaters in Roxhill Park, and runs through the neighborhood as a surface creek and a buried culvert. The Creek's pathway offers various opportunities for open space development. Currently, there is little acknowledgment (signage, access points,

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viewpoints, etc.) of the Creek's presence or significance.

The Plan contains recommendations for developing the Creek's potential as, a significant neighborhood asset in keeping with City of Seattle goals to reclaim these precious resources.

PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE GOALS & POLICIES

The primary open space goal of this Plan is to link existing open spaces and community **attractions** together with safe and attractive pedestrian pathways. The Plan also anticipates "needs associated with future growth. This will enable the creation of a comprehensive trail system that will serve the growing and diverse population of the community.

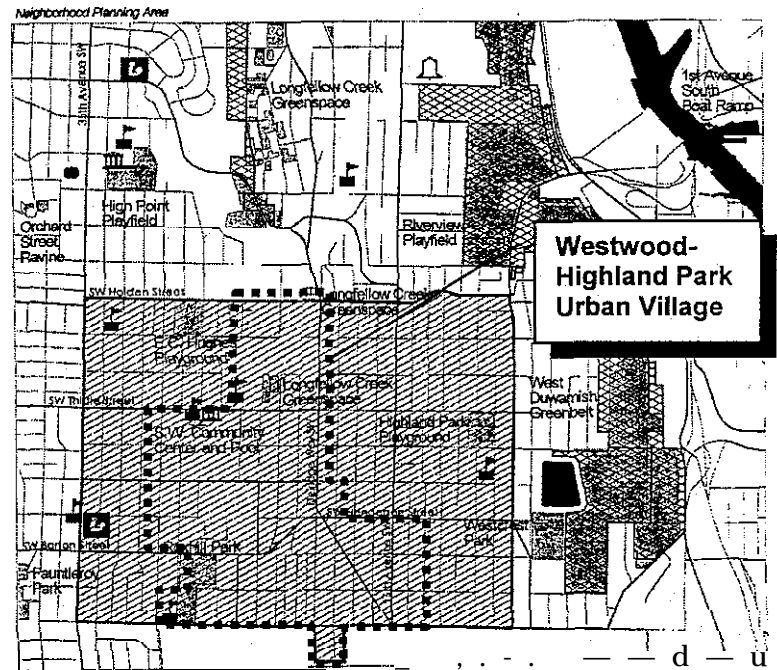
The Plan also recommends the reclamation and enhancement of the Longfellow Creek corridor for historical, environmental, and recreational objectives. Longfellow Creek has its headwaters in Roxhill Park, and runs through the neighborhood on the surface creek and in underground piping. The Creek's corridor offers various opportunities for open space development. Currently, there is almost no acknowledgment of the Creek's presence or significance. The Plan proposes the establishment of the Longfellow Creek Legacy Trail as a central design principle that can unify the community around the central circulation, recreation, and environmental theme that the proposed improvements will provide.

Goal A community with accessible and fictional parks, open space, recreational facilities, and natural systems that are connected to serve Westwood and Highland Park's diverse population.

Policy Strive to reclaim and enhance the Longfellow Creek corridor by creating a comprehensive trail system that enhances public access and links to the existing parks and other community attractions,

Policy Encourage direct public access through observation points to Longfellow Creek and it's environs that features the importance of natural systems and the neighborhood's geological history.

WESTWOOD - HIGHLAND PARK NEIGHBORHOOD



- Community Centers
- Public Schools
- Libraries
- P-Patch
- Colleges

- Neighborhood Planning Area
- Greenspace Planning Area
- Parks and Open Space
- Arterial Streets
- Other Streets

Map Produced: August 1997

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Policy Seek to coordinate the Longfellow Creek Legacy Trail Project with the Delridge neighborhood's creek trail system to help achieve a coordinated community trail system.

Policy Seek funding opportunities for improvements of Longfellow Creek that connects the Westwood and Highland Park segment with the Delridge neighborhood creek trail system,

Policy Seek property acquisition opportunities for small parks and open space f. serve the community.

Policy Seek community-wide recreational opportunities.

Policy Encourage a civic center and recreational complex that serves the entire community with the Denny Sealth Complex

PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE SOLUTIONS

LONGFELLOW CREEK LEGACY TRAIL & COMMUNITY-WIDE TRAIL NETWORK

Longfellow Creek originates in Roxhill Park, flows north, and creates the valley between Westwood & Highland Park. The Creek flows out of the Planning Area northward into the Delridge neighborhood, and ultimately empties into Puget sound at Elliot Bay. The Creek has suffered from neglect over the years as West Seattle urbanized and increased in density. The Creek was forgotten behind thickets of weeds, abused by dumping and litter, perceived a risk by seeming to attract danger, and in places was buried beneath the ground.

Because of recent efforts of neighborhood groups, Longfellow Creek is now recognized as an asset to the community and celebrated as a natural attraction, a learning tool, flood control measure, and finally the central identity of the area.

Longfellow Creek is the mine of the Westwood & Highland Park Planning Area (and communities to the north), and with specific improvements the Creek will be a source of pride for the community. The revival of Longfellow Creek is one part of the Millennium Project, a City-wide effort, and as such has priority and merits attention for improvement.

Longfellow Creek Legacy Trail - a verbal tour of the Trail starting at the south end.

1) Within Roxhill Park, use existing Roxhill



Park paths through the Park north to Barton St. Establish a trailhead. Install interpretative signage describing the trail's route, history and significance.

2) At Westwood Town Center, the trail will follow a course that approximates the Creek's original route. Work with the Westwood Town Center design team planning Innovations to include celebration of the Creek with banners, pavement striping and patterns.

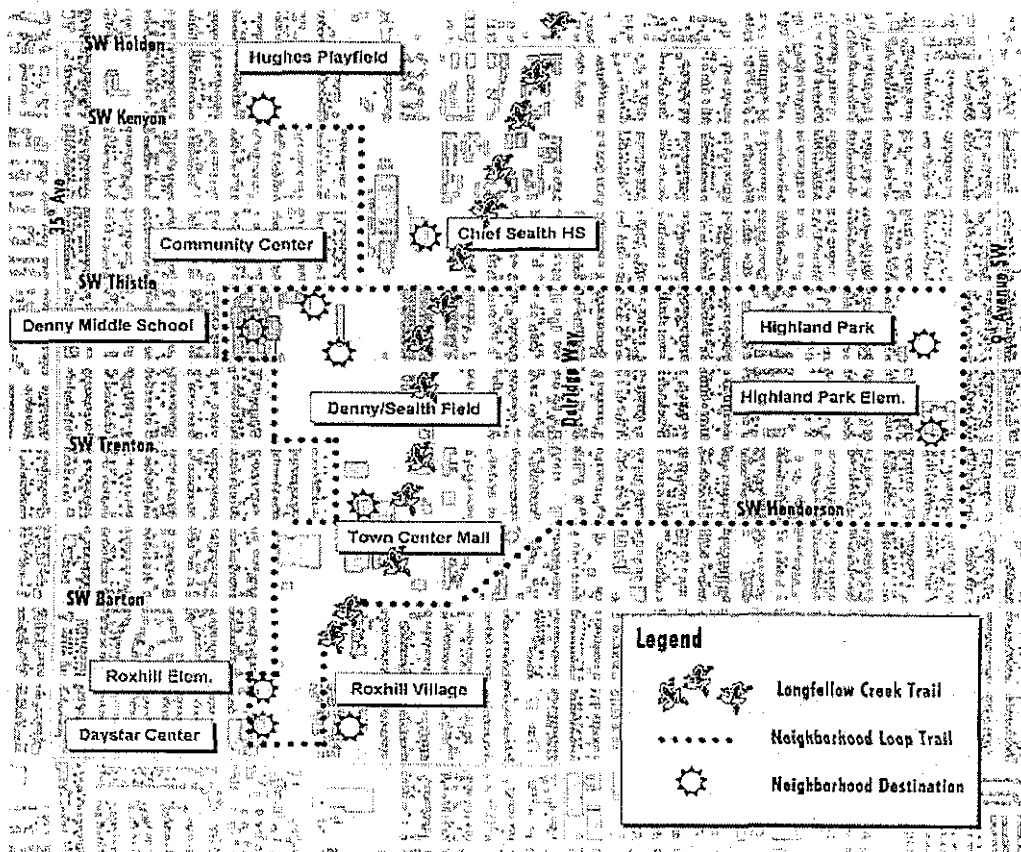
3) Between SW Trenton St. and SW Thistle St., trail follows existing public rights-of-way adjacent to the eastern boundary of Denny-Sealth Playfield. Install interpretative signage identifying the trail route and describing how its presence

underground influences surface effects such as the nature of vegetation and drainage.

4) Build a viewing deck at the bus stop at 25th Ave. SW and SW Thistle St. next to the existing open space to provide a viewpoint and connection to the segments north and the Delridge neighborhood's part of Longfellow Creek.

5) North of this point, the Creek daylights. At Sealth High School, use existing study area walkways and access points. North of Sealth High School to northern boundary of the Plarming Area at SW Holden St., trail continues through existing apartment complex. Work with property owners to design access to or acknowledgment of the Creek and accommodate a link-up with the Longfellow Creek Trail plan for the Delridge Neighborhood.

Longfellow Creek Legacy Trail



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Community- Wide Pedestrian Linkages and Related Parks and Open Space Improvements

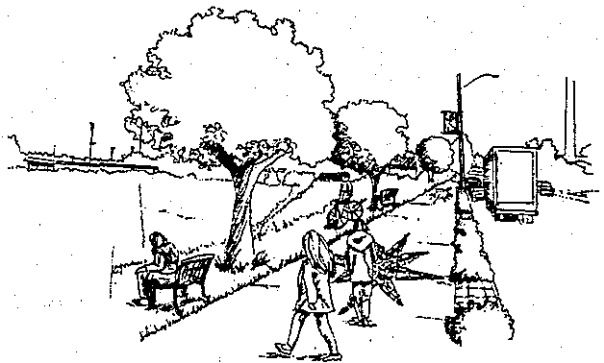
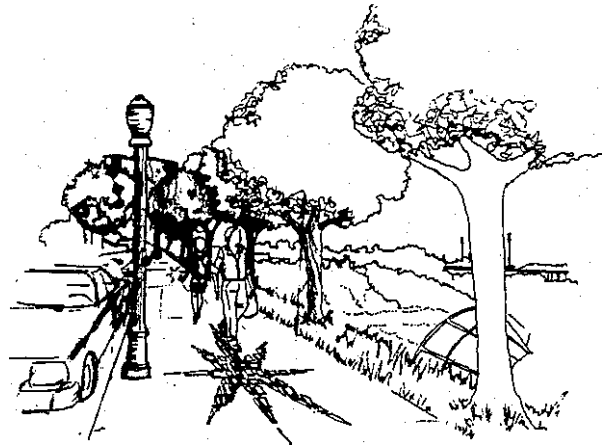
The neighborhoods contain prized open spaces and recreational opportunities, but these community assets do not exhibit a cohesive or convenient relationship with one another; today, they are valuable islands of open space and recreation, independent of one another. This Plan seeks to tie all of the open space and recreation assets together with a pedestrian pathway system using existing public rights-of-way, in a manner that improves the pedestrian safety, provides linkages to other parts of the Planning Area, and celebrates the area with a strengthened identity and more amenities.

The proposed pedestrian linkage system would provide pathways to link schools, community activity centers, shopping and parks throughout the Westwood & Highland Park neighborhoods. The segments should be suitable for users seeking an easy stroll or a vigorous workout. Banners, pavement treatments and directional signage should make the links easy to follow and safe. Highly visible trail markers also will alert drivers to the likely presence of pedestrians at street crossings. These markers also serve as decorative features in the neighborhoods.

Neighborhood Pedestrian and Bicycle Trail Loop - a verbal tour starting at the northwest corner of the Planning Area.

1) Hughes Playground, 1 block east on SW Kenyon St., then south on 27th Ave. SW. to SW Thistle St. adjacent to the western edge of Chief Sealth High School. Install a sidewalk on the east side of the street and include the pavement pattern established

for neighborhood trail. Install pedestrian-scale lighting and banners. Designate 5 feet of the roadway adjacent to the new sidewalk as a bike lane and install necessary signage to alert drivers, Install Neighborhood Trail map/kiosk highlighting points of interest along the trail.



2) Continue west along SW Thistle St. to Denny Middle School and the SW Community Center. Mark the trail with banners and/or Neighborhood Trail pavement pattern, pedestrian-scale lighting and bike lane. Re-stripe crosswalks.

3) Head south, following the perimeter around the western boundary of the Denny-Sealth play field. Mark the trail with banners and/or Neighborhood Trail pavement pattern, pedestrian-scale lighting

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and bike lane. Plant street trees. Install benches and trash receptacles.

4) South of SW Trenton St., trail continues on the west side of the Westwood Town Center along 28th Ave. SW. Replace metal guardrail at the west entrance to Westwood Town Center with decorative bollards. Work with Mall designers to develop a park-like entry at this site. Continue the bike lane, pavement treatment and/or banners.

5) South of SW Barton St., trail ends at Roxhill Park and Roxhill Elementary, with connection points to Roxbury Village. Continue the bike lane, pavement treatment and/ or banners. Strengthen pedestrian crossing points on SW Barton St. with re-striking and necessary signage. Develop trail linkages to the headwaters of Longfellow Creek, using existing trails adjacent to Roxbury Village.

6) Trail connects with Delridge Way SW via SW Barton St. on north side of SW Barton, then continue east on SW Barton St. to SW Henderson St. Continue the bike lane, pavement treatment and/or banners. Re-stripe crosswalks. Install signage at the Delridge Way intersection alerting drivers to the likely presence of pedestrians and cyclists.

7) Trail continues east along SW Henderson St. to 10th Ave. SW, then mirth to Highland Park Elementary School and Highland Park. Existing paths in nearby Westcrest Park can be included in this segment.

8) Continue the bike lane, pavement treatment and /or banners. Re-stripe crosswalks. Install Neighborhood Trail map/ kiosk highlighting points of interest along the trail.

9) Trail loops back to the SW Community Center along SW Thistle St. at 27th Ave. SW. Continue the bike lane, pavement treatment

and/ or banners, Strengthen the pedestrian crossing point at SW Thistle St. and Delridge Way with re-stripping and signage.

10) Improve **existing** trail in SW Kenyon St. right-of-way between 24th Ave. SW and SW Kenyon St., where dead-end turn-around is at the Westridge Park Apartment complex, to allow safe all season use.

Public Safety

Design the Legacy Trail with features which use Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.

Community Identity: Aesthetics

Develop new business district marketing materials that include the Longfellow Creek Legacy Trail,

Transit

Upgrade bus stops to include distinct shelter decoration, high standard pavement, seating and improved street lighting.

INTEGRATE THE DENNY SEALTH SOUTHWEST RECREATION COMPLEX CAMPUS MASTER PLAN

Much like the Ballard neighborhood's proposed Municipal Center, the Westwood and Highland Park communities view the planned improvements at the SW Recreation Complex as the chance to bring focus and attention to the Recreation Complex as West Seattle's very own South Civic Center. The Seattle School District's Recreation Complex Master Plan represents a unique opportunity to leverage Neighborhood goals with this substantial capital improvement project, and include specific neighborhood needs not previously identified in the Master Plan.

The redevelopment also represents a chance for the neighborhood to add its analysis of

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impacts anticipated with the completion Of the project. Chief of among these for the neighborhood is the change in vehicle and pedestrian access to and circulation around the Recreation Complex, after completion of the project. Because the Recreation Complex adjoins the Westwood Town Center, there are additional congestion problems, and on certain dates during sports events, there are parking and crowd management issues to be resolved.

Pedestrian Amenities, Parks, & Open Space

Study feasibility of locating Longfellow Creek Headwaters interpretive/ nature center on Recreation Complex Campus, taking advantage of the existing Sealth High School nature study area north of SW Thistle St.

Southwest Community Center Improvements

Consider the following services in the Campus Master Plan

- . Expand pool to include 50 meter below grade facility, with wave pool and water slides.
- . Add warm water therapy/teaching pool, 15 yards by 25 yards.
- . Expand locker rooms to the south of existing locker rooms to include family change rooms, end larger adult and youth locker rooms.
- Add 2 story structure south of the pool to accommodate aerobic exercise area, elevated indoor track, weight room, racquetball courts, and concession area for snack bar and pro shop.
- . Replace sauna, public lockers, timing system.
- . A gymnasium.

With facility development, include:

- Disaster preparedness Command Center.

- . Seismic upgrades for the recreation building itself.

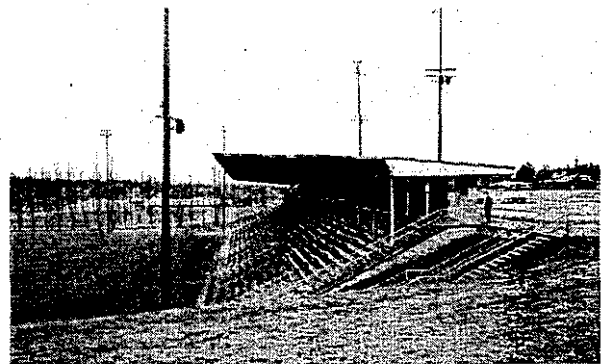
Other facilities to include:

- . A West Seattle Teen Center (City Council priority).
- . City of Seattle Neighborhood Service Center (presently in the "Triangle Commercial Core," on 16th Ave., SW).

Integrate the Longfellow Creek Legacy Trail design and goals with the Dermey Sealth SW Recreation Complex Campus Master Plan, including residential access and recreational priorities as identified in the Neighborhood Plan:

To solve historic pedestrian safety problems, and large number of children using the Recreation Complex, design and install crosswalks along intersections including but not limited to SW Thistle St., SW Trenton St., and 32nd Ave. SW, that ensure safer pedestrian access to Recreation Complex. This includes

- . Durable striping
- . Pedestrian crossing lights
- . Improved street lighting
- Overhead pedestrian crossing signs
- . Curb bulbs at intersections
- . Street trees.
- . Use of strobe-effect crosswalk technology.

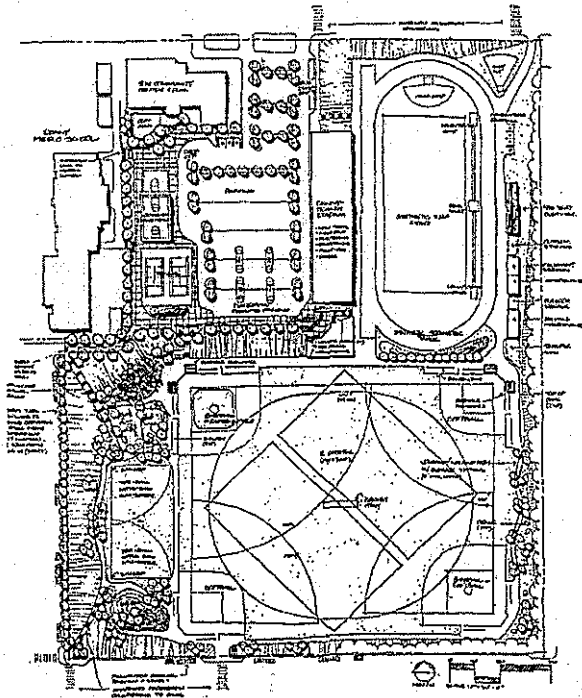


Develop site Master Plan to ensure safe pedestrian access from the on-site parking

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Recreation Complex's exterior areas for litter, safety, teen work training, and event-day traffic and crowd control. This may be part of an existing Sealth High School initiative led by sports team staff.

The Seattle Public Library System, the Department of Parks and Recreation, and other agencies and the WestWood & Highland Park community should partner in the planning and development of a computer lab facility within the center to enable community access to electronic databases and technology for educational and recreational purposes.



Community-based Initiatives

Create continuing and self-governing stewardship body to monitor and maintain the enhanced Community Center services.

Transportation & Parking - Comprehensive Access/ Circulation Plan

In order to address the parking and congestion impacts associated with the facility, conduct a project-oriented

circulation study encompassing vehicular and pedestrian access and parking (management), to assess:

- Event-generated vehicle access, and parking with SW Recreation Complex Campus Master Plan.
- Non event - generated recreational vehicle access and parking under SW Recreation Complex Campus. Master Plan.
- With above data, create Transportation Plan to:

secure residents' access to on street parking during events

maintain free movement during events

offer, where assessment shows necessary, additional parking and transit service, including

temporary stops and bus idling areas,

include an agreement with Westwood Town Center to provide event-day parking at Westwood Town Center nearest to recreation campus, with crowd and traffic personnel.

provide safe pedestrian access at all times.

provide traffic calming measures at all times, including speed control on SW Thistle St., in downhill parts of street.

Include street light improvement.

Provide increased event-day transit service.

Design and install road configuration improvements to enhance vehicle movement and to reduce backup at specific intersections:

- left turn pockets and lights at intersection of Delridge Way SW and SW Thistle St.
- left turn pockets and lights at intersection of 35th Ave. SW and SW Thistle St.

Near-Term Recommendations

On SW Trenton St., conduct a community tree planting project from 35th Ave. SW to Delridge Way SW. **Other** SW Trenton St. improvements should include:

- Street Lighting
- . Benches
- . Painted Crosswalks

Coordinate actions of Housing Authority, DPR, School District and community to integrate headwaiters wetlands interpretation center in Roxhill Park, Roxbury Village, and Legacy Trail.

- . Based on available information (and using existing BG Cummings wetlands plan), map out wetlands
- . With SHA, resolve conflicts with SHA's projects and wetlands area.
- . Using existing Cummings wetlands plan, create pathways within Roxhill Park and on SHA property to wetlands area,
- Create study area signage and maintenance agreement with DPR, SHA, and SSD.

Develop SW Thistle St. as the primary pedestrian connection between the Westwood and Highland Park neighborhoods. Design and build a SW Thistle St. Art Walk from 9th Ave. SW to the SW Community Center. Provide other amenities that should include

- . Benches
- . Banners
- . Street Lighting
- . Pocket Park at 12th Ave. SW hill climb.

At major pedestrian points of entry and access at Town Center, designate dedicated pedestrian paths to be designed with or without the Legacy Trail. Install markers and banners.



Incorporate Longfellow Creek Legacy Trail with new construction requiring design review in Urban Village.

Develop a Disaster Preparedness Plan that prescribes emergency medical service actions necessary in event of natural or man-made disaster as it effects the Plarming Area, should the West Seattle bridges become impassable. The Disaster Preparedness Plan should include provision of a Critical Care Center and a Command Post at the SW Community Center.

Work with DPR to develop strategies to install playground equipment and designate leash free areas at Westcrest Park.